CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT

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LETTER DATED 5 JUNE 1998 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF SWEDEN ADDRESSED TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL OF THE CONFERENCE TRANSMITTING THE TEXTS OF A PRESS RELEASE ISSUED BY THE SWEDISH MINISTRY FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS ON 12 MAY 1998 AND A PRESS STATEMENT BY THE FOREIGN MINISTER OF SWEDEN ON 28 MAY 1998

I have the honour to transmit to you the texts of a Press release issued by the Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs on 12 May 1998, and a Press Statement by the Foreign Minister of Sweden on 28 May 1998.

I shall be grateful if these texts are circulated as an official document of the Conference on Disarmament.

(Signed) Lars Norberg
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

12 May, 1998

Press release on 12 May 1998 by the Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs on India's nuclear tests.

"I am dismayed. India's nuclear testing is totally unacceptable. The massive criticism from the world community shows that India has taken the wrong path," the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Mrs Lena Hjelm-Wallén, stated at a seminar on nuclear disarmament in Stockholm on Tuesday.

"We have reached a point where new political force is needed in nuclear disarmament work. After a period of success in connection with the end of the cold war, there are signs today of a weakening, inter alia in the START process. There have been no negotiations at the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva since 1996," the Minister said.

"The nuclear weapon states should immediately take their nuclear weapons off alert and provide assurances through a legally binding international agreement that they will not expose states that have refrained from acquiring nuclear weapons, to the use or threat of the use of nuclear weapons," Mrs Hjelm-Wallén said. "The idea of being able to use nuclear weapons to deter the use of chemical and biological weapons must be emphatically rejected."

"India, Israel and Pakistan must now take their responsibility and become parties to the almost universal Non-Proliferation Treaty, NPT. New states or groups that acquire nuclear weapons create very serious threats to future security," the Minister said.

28 May 1998

Press statement on 28 May 1998 by the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Mrs. Lena Hjelm-Wallén on Pakistan's nuclear weapons test

"Pakistan's test explosion must be strongly and unequivocally condemned.

"In spite of the international community's urgent and forceful requests Pakistan has followed India's irresponsible example and taken this dangerous step.

"The Pakistani nuclear test means a further escalation of the situation in the region which is already very serious. This spiral of nuclear tests seriously threatens international peace and security and must absolutely be stopped.

"I urge Pakistan and India to take the necessary measures as soon as possible to reverse this extremely dangerous development. Both parties must fully consider their responsibility and realize the necessity of dialogue and the assumption of joint responsibility for peace and security in the region by peaceful means.

"I also urge Pakistan and India to accede without delay and unconditionally to the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) and the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT).

"At the same time it is the responsibility of the five nuclear weapons states to show the way by taking prompt and concrete action for intensified nuclear disarmament with the aim to achieve the complete abolition of these weapons.

"In today's consultations in the UN Security Council Sweden will raise the question of Pakistan's nuclear tests."